

A year after Sept 11 attack

# No trace of one-third of WTC victims yet

AFF, New York

A year after the terror strike on the World Trade Center, one of the largest forensic investigations in history still has not found a trace of about a third of the 2,819 victims.

In July, Robert Shaler, head of the forensic division of New York's Medical Examiner's Office, confirmed what experts had feared from the beginning: some 800 missing victims will probably never be confirmed dead.

The force of the two airplanes, loaded with fuel, hitting the 110-story twin towers unleashed a fire that continued to smolder for months after September 11, burning up in the debris the last traces of hundreds of loved ones.

A certain number of people have disappeared completely, said Charles Hirsch, Chief Medical Examiner. And out of the fragments collected, Hirsch said, they aren't sure if they have enough to run a DNA comparison on some of the damaged tissue found.

Since September 11 the Medical Examiner's Office has been working

on the awesome task of matching the bodies and human fragments found in the rubble to the names on the list of those reported missing.

Almost 20,000 fragments have been found, plucked directly from the smoking pit of Ground Zero, or rescued from the debris shipped over to Staten Island.

So far only 1,370 bodies have been identified, less than half of those missing, said Ellen Borakove, spokesman for the Medical Examiner's Office. Eight more months, she said, will be needed to analyze the rest of the fragments and try to match them to victims' DNA samples submitted by families and friends.

Some families, after the weeks turned into months, finally held funerals to say goodbye, even if it was to an empty casket.

Hundreds of forensic and DNA experts have been working to analyze the DNA as quickly as possible in order to put as many families' minds at rest as possible.

But the 16 refrigerated trucks parked outside of the Medical Examiner's Office could not cope

with the sheer amount of work.

Some bodies were so torn apart that rescuers would find a hundreds fragments from the same body. And even though the fine-tooth combing of the debris has finally come to an end, remains are still being found: a human bone was recently discovered on a nearby rooftop.

A call went out and public and private laboratories across the country capable of such analysis were enlisted to help expedite the process.

Despite their help, hundreds of families will never know for sure about the deaths of their loved ones.

## Ctg AL protests attack on Hasina's motorcade

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Chittagong City unit of Awami League staged a rally yesterday afternoon protesting the attack on the motorcade of Awami League chief and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina in Satkhira.

Addressing the rally in front Ctg City Awami League office at Darul Fazal Market, the local AL leaders blamed the ruling BNP-backed criminals for the attack.

The AL leaders demanded immediate arrest of and punishment to the attackers.

The rally was addressed, among others, by AL Ctg City unit president M A Mannan and general secretary and Mayor A B M Mohiuddin Chowdhury. Other AL leaders of the city and district units were also present in the rally.

City BCL units also brought out processions in the afternoon protesting the attack on the motorcade of Sheikh Hasina.

# Blair faces stiff opposition over Iraq stance

REUTERS, London

British Prime Minister Tony Blair faces stiff opposition from grass roots members of his own Labour Party if he backs any US-led military strike against Iraq, a survey showed yesterday.

Britain's Times newspaper found that 60 out of 100 Labour constituency chairman and chairwomen asked "expressed strong opposition" to a war against Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein.

Only five said they would support Blair if he decided to commit British troops to any military action.

The survey's findings came as US Vice President Dick Cheney hammered home Washington's case for pre-emptive action against Baghdad, brushing off a groundswell of unease among European allies, Muslim states and broader world public opinion.

"Simply stated, there is no doubt that Saddam Hussein now has weapons of mass destruction.

There is no doubt that he is amassing them to use them against our friends, against our allies and against us," Cheney said.

"What we must not do in the face of a mortal threat is to give in to wishful thinking or to willful blindness. We must not simply look away, hope for the best and leave the matter for some future administration to resolve," he said.

The Times survey found that while a significant minority of those asked were against pre-emptive action under any circumstances, a majority said they might support such action if there was "clear and independent evidence" that Saddam had stocks of nuclear weapons.

The survey echoes a poll in Wednesday's Guardian newspaper which showed 52 per cent of

Labour supporters believed Britons did not support military action against Iraq.

Blair, who vowed to stand "shoulder-to-shoulder" with Bush in his "war on terror" after the September 11 attacks, has signalled he would back a US strike, but faces growing opposition from members of his own Labour Party, church leaders and, according to some reports, members of his own cabinet.

Labour opposition to his support for Bush is likely to burst into the open at a series of party conferences coming up in recent weeks where Blair will face grass-roots members and traditionally left-wing Trades Union supporters.

A Baghdad report adds: A US strike on Iraq would be the last nail in Washington's coffin given the growing worldwide opposition to any such campaign to oust Saddam Hussein's regime, an Iraqi newspaper said yesterday.

"The US administration is hammering the last nail in its coffin, and it seems that this administration now realises that even its allies have deserted it and that it would not finance its war," the official Al-Iraq said.

US President George W Bush's "boasts are aimed at scoring public opinion points but they have come up against a wall of rejection," the daily said.

The Bush administration was "seeking to make gains domestically to allow him to at least delay the legislative elections and deflect attention away from the recession the US economy is suffering from."

It has made "futile and irresponsible statements against our country and its leaders, who constitute a complex and a terrible nightmare for American politicians," Al-Iraq said.

## Dengue

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ABM Ziaur Rahman, chief pathologist of the hospital, yesterday.

"We have no time to talk. There is no scope for delay. We have to work on every blood sample to count platelet and report back to the dengue wards," said Monsur Ahmed, a medical technologist.

On-duty army officials also admitted to the pressure but said the situation was under control and there was no need for platelet for dengue haemorrhagic fever (DHF) patients.

"Our medical officers and staff are managing the patients well...we are working closely with the hospital staff," said Major Mohsin Uddin Ahmed.

The on-duty doctors at the dengue ward No. 1 complained that the authorities assigned doctors disproportionately without thinking about the mounting pressure.

Meanwhile, the Biswasahitya Kendra, assisted by Pravati, an organisation, yesterday launched a special drive with 100 workers to clean all possible aedes-breeding places in Ramna Park.

The holes in branches of the trees on the Ramna Park were filled with cement to prevent rainwater from spilling into.

## Garment

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ciliation-cum-arbitration committee at Chittagong, like Dhaka, for peaceful settlement of disputes to be made by labourers.

The owners' association will "immediately take necessary steps" in this regard in consultation with the garment owners in Chittagong.

Weekly holidays and maternity leave will come into force from September 30 in those garment factories where the provisions have not yet been implemented.

As per agreement, BGMEA will also take necessary step so that the workers can draw their salaries and overtime allowances between 7th and 10th of every month.

Workers in any readymade garment factory can form trade union or constitute participation committee in those units where there is no trade union.

BGMEA will take necessary initiatives to set up industrial zones for garments on availability of land. The Oikya Parishad will also press the government for allocating land for this purpose.

An agreement-implementation monitoring committee headed by a BGMEA director will be formed to oversee implementation of the broad-based agreement.

## Sunken ships

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ships for removing those, but they did not respond as it was very expensive, port sources said.

Wrecks of two other ships near the KAFCO jetty in the Karnaphuli remained unsalvaged, particularly hindering movement of large foreign ships to and from the jetty for loading and unloading of cargo. Besides, over a dozen ship wrecks remained sunken around the port area.

Some ship wrecks remained unsalvaged at different points in the Karnaphuli beyond the port limit. The sites are under the jurisdiction of mercantile marine department (MMD), the sources said.

Officials of MMD said tenders were floated on several occasions for salvaging the wrecks, but no response was received from bidders. A fresh move is likely soon.

Meanwhile, wrecks of about 20 sunken vessels were salvaged from Chittagong port channel after the 1991 catastrophic cyclone to restore ship movement to and from the port.

## JU mark sheet

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examination and also gave two sets of mark against one answer script. She also resorted to other irregularities, the letter mentioned.

Asked about the internal examiner's claim that she had submitted marks against 91 answer scripts and also against another sent by the relevant examination office, the chairman of the examination committee told the VC there is record in the examination office that she had received 91 answer scripts.

Meanwhile, the 91 examinees concerned are in a state of total uncertainty about their results. "We are thinking of an agitation to press the authorities to publish our results immediately", one of them said.

When contacted, Vice-chancellor Prof Jasim Uddin Ahmad said, "We are taking administrative steps to resolve the matter soon".

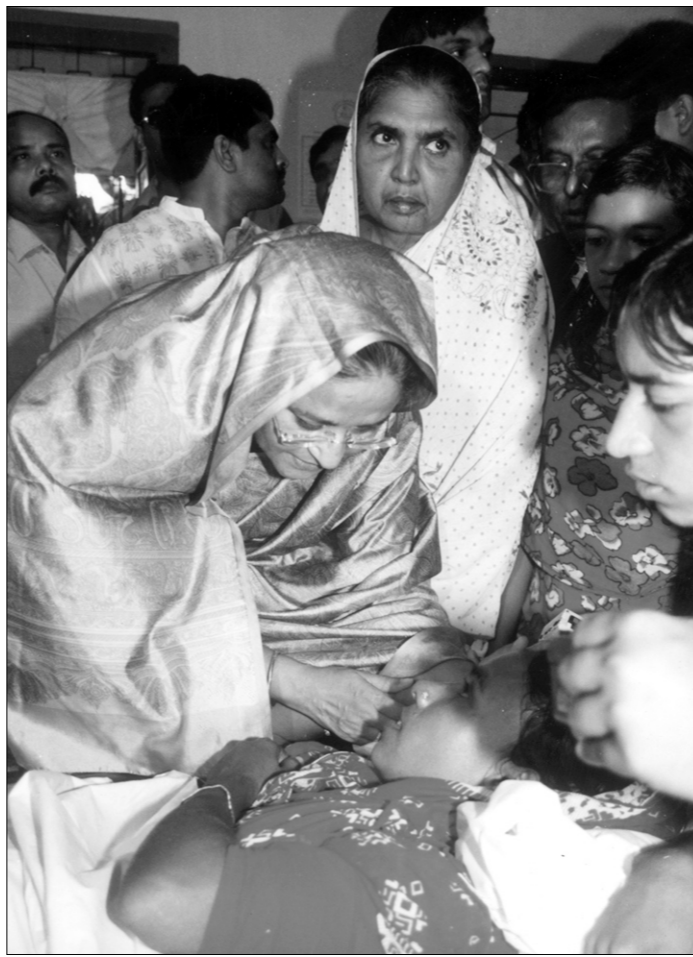


PHOTO: STAR

Awami League President Sheikh Hasina visits Mahfuza Khatun, wife of freedom fighter Atiar Rahman, at the Satkhira Hospital yesterday. Mahfuza was abducted and raped allegedly by the ruling party activists on Monday night.

## Camel jockeys

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Mymensingh, and five-year-old Robin Hossain, son of Abul Hossain of Fatehnagar, Noajeshpur, Chittagong, are waiting at the centre in anticipation to see their parents.

The BNWLA officials told The Daily Star that they were waiting for legal procedure. They will file cases against the traffickers before handing the boys over to their parents.

Nuru Mia, son of Hares Mia, of Banchharampur, Brahmanbaria and Ijob Mia, son of Gafur Mia, of Dhola, Trishal, Mymensingh, study at the BNWLA school.

Sajib Mia, son of Yusuf Miah, Dholaikhal in the city, and Alam Mia, son of Rafiq Mia, of Shahidnagar in Narayanganj, also want to go home.

Sajib was flown to Dubai and returned home on July 19. Sajib used to work under Sale-bin-Sape in Abu Dhabi on a payment of 500 to 600 dirham a month.

Bedona Begum, mother of Alam who was also trafficked to UAE, burst into tears when she saw her son at the BNWLA shelter.

One Sonai Bibi took Alam from his home, promising him a job seven years ago, Bedona sobbed.

Two others are Mohammad Rubel, son of Mohammad Jahangir and Mohammad Titu (father's name unknown).

The BNWLA officials said Kashem Mia Robin, now living in UAE, trafficked several Bangladeshi boys to the Middle Eastern country.

# Developers flout law AL calls hartal

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city's storm and waste water, they said.

Besides, environment experts and town planners cautioned if earth filling is not stopped immediately, discharge of storm water from the main city areas would be seriously obstructed, worsening the flood situation.

They also questioned Rajuk's judgement in approving the housing projects in a vulnerable area without a 'detailed area plan'.

As per the master plan of the city, a 'detailed area plan' is needed for approval of any housing project in an area.

East West obtained Rajuk approval in 1990 and Eastern Housing in 1987 for their projects.

Some Rajuk sources said the developers had deviated from the approved plans and expanded the project area.

The Bashundhara project area was expanded to 549 acres from the approved 305 acres and the Banasree-Aftabnagar project to 1310.28 acres from 829.45 acres.

An investigation by the Town Planning Department of Rajuk has recently revealed numerous irregularities in the implementation pro-

cess.

The probe found that the Bashundhara project was not being implemented as per the approved layout. Plots have been allotted by reclaiming lands earmarked for lake and other civic amenities.

As part of the Banasree-Aftabnagar project, the developer built a road on a piece of land owned by Bangladesh Television (BTV) and encroached upon 700 bighas of khas land, narrowing down the Rampura canal by earth filling.

Security guards at the Bashundhara project did not allow a photojournalist of The Daily Star to take photographs of the project area. They said the authorities had ordered them not to allow any journalist to visit the area.

Meanwhile, Chairman of the Bashundhara Group Ahmed Akbar Sobhan told The Daily Star that the Rajuk claim of illegal land reclamation was baseless and ill motivated.

"We are implementing our project according to all the conditions laid out by the Rajuk. Nothing is wrong with our project.

Moreover, Sobhan termed the 300-foot wide and 14-mile long road constructed by the Rajuk from the city's Joarsahara to its Purbachal

project a 'big threat to the city environment.'

He also alleged that the city development body was itself a 'law violator' and filling up low-lying land for its Purbachal project on the eastern fringe of the city.

Chairman of the Islam Group, parent concern of the Eastern Housing, Manzurul Islam could not be contacted for his comment.

Asaduzzaman, executive director of the group, refused to comment on the issue and asked this correspondent to talk to Director (Operations) Faruq Chowdhury, who, in turn, referred the matter to another Director (Operations) Nazim Newaz Chowdhury. However, Nazim Newaz could not be contacted either.

Meanwhile, the Rajuk is trying to "sort things out, but it will take time," its chairman said. "No projects in violation of law would be approved by the Rajuk."

The Rajuk has already formulated draft regulations for private developers and already sent those to the housing and public works ministry for approval, he added.

However, he said, any immediate action against illegal activities by the developers would require "integrated efforts."

# Hasina's motorcade attacked

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arms. Earlier, they stopped a bus, forcibly took away the key from the bus driver and placed the vehicle right on the road blocking the opposition leader's way.

The attackers threw shoes and bricks on Hasina's car for 10 minutes and tried to tear the flag on her car before the escorting policemen with the assistance of ASP (circle) Zillur Rahman could finally clear the road for her journey to Jessore.

Witnesses the attack was made by some 50 people led by lawmaker Habib's elder brother and Kolaroa upazila BNP president Rafiqul Islam. They included upazila BNP vice president Meherullah Master, local Jubodal president Ashraf Hossain, secretary Kader Bachhu, the MP's nephew Rumel, local union

parishad chairman Rakib and party cadres Mobin, Mafi, Ranju, Biplab, Ripon, Lucky.

Hasina's political secretary Saber Hossain Chowdhury told reporters that the attackers "belonging to BNP and Jamaat-e-Islami also attempted to spray corrosive chemicals on her car, but the bid was foiled".

Two jeeps carrying journalists from Dhaka for covering Hasina's tour of the country's south-western region somehow passed through the trouble spot safely.

The local journalists who were assaulted included Kalidas Roy, Erbar Hossain Ibrahim Hossain Tuhin and Habibur Rahman. Their cameras were also taken away and they were scolded in filthy language for writing reports on BNP lawmaker Habib.

Local journalist Shubhash Chowdhury later filed a case with Kolaroa police station. Satkhira Press Club President Abu Ahmed and General Secretary Abdul Bari in a statement demanded immediate arrest of the attackers and removal of the OC of Kolaroa police station.

The press club members were holding an emergency meeting on the issue till the filing of this report last night.

Satkhira units of the AL and its front organisations and various other socio-cultural organisations condemned the attack on Hasina and demanded immediate arrest and punishment of the culprits.

At Satkhira, Hasina met Mahfuza Khatun at the Sadar Hospital and enquired about her treatment.

Mahfuza, wife of a poor freedom fighter from Hijaldi village in Kolaroa upazila, was allegedly raped on August 26. Local BNP men were blamed for this.

After visiting Mahfuza, Hasina addressed a huge spontaneous gathering. She rejected the government-formed medical board's report that she was not raped and demanded immediate and independent re-investigation into the incident.

The opposition leader blamed the activists of BNP and its alliance partners for criminal offences like killing and rape across the country. She held the prime minister and her son responsible for the wheat scam.

Hasina came to Satkhira from Khulna where she visited another rape victim, Chhabi Rani Mandal.

## JP (Mizan) condemns attack on Hasina

UNB, Dhaka

Jatiya Party (Manzu) chairman Anwar Hossain Manzu MP and secretary general Sheikh Shahidul Islam have condemned the attack on Awami League president Sheikh Hasina yesterday.

"We are concerned at the incident of attack on Sheikh Hasina at Satkhira. We condemn this attack," they said in a joint statement.

The JP leaders said "such political interference will push the nation towards conflict and unrest, which will not bring good to anyone."

# Debris of missing Russian plane found: 16 killed

AFF, Vladivostok

Rescuers early yesterday found debris of a Russian transport plane that disappeared Thursday with 16 people on board as it was about to land in the Russian far east near the border with China, a spokesman for the emergencies ministry's local office said.

However, the fate of the aircraft's 14 passengers and two crew members was not yet clear, as rescuers had failed to find either survivors or bodies.

Part of the Antonov An-28's fuselage and undercarriage was discovered near the village of Ayan, where it was scheduled to land, some 850 kilometres (530 miles) north of Khabarovsk, where it had been travelling from, the official added.

Among the plane's passengers were a 57 year-old Japanese engineer, Saito Tadawoshi, and two children aged eight and 11.

The plane last made contact with air controllers at around 0800 GMT Thursday, 12 minutes before it was scheduled to land in Ayan, on the shore of the Okhotsk sea.

Meanwhile, Russian Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov confirmed yesterday that a military helicopter that

crashed in Chechnya earlier this month killing 118 people on board had been shot down by a missile.

"The helicopter was shot down from an Iglu missile complex" on the outskirts of the rebel capital Grozny on August 19, Ivanov told reporters.

However, Ivanov did not directly blame Chechen rebels for the attack, which caused the heaviest Russian loss of the 35-month guerilla war.

The Chechen rebels have claimed responsibility for the strike on the Mi-26 transport helicopter.

## City roads

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use the over-bridge, consciously avoid them. The traffic police sometimes conduct raids to clear the bridges, but these are only temporary and are mostly eye wash.

All in all, our city life is fraught with many hazards on the roads, which could be prevented if the authorities concerned took these problems seriously. Under the circumstances, it behoves the city-dwellers to be more cautious and watch out for pitfalls lurking on the roads.

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to power," he said.

Speaking at the press conference, AL Presidium member Zillur Rahman alleged that the government was trying to kill Hasina sensing a vigorous movement against it under her leadership.

He said criminal activities like killing, repression and rape are frequently taking place across the country. The AL chief is rushing to the crime spots to protest the government's "mis-rule", he said.

Tofail Ahmed said, as a former prime minister Sheikh Hasina deserves protection by the Special Security Force (SSF), but the government has withdrawing the security putting her life at stake.

He alleged that the attack on Hasina took place in presence of the Superintendent of Police (SP) of Satkhira.

Among others, AL leaders Sajeda Chowdhury, Suranjit Sengupta, Dr Mostafa Jalal

Mohiuddin, Mukul Bosh, Abdul Mannan were present at the press conference.

Earlier on the day, AL and its different front organisations held a rally in front of the party's central office protesting the alleged attack of Hasina.

At the rally, Abdur Razzak said attacks will not stop her from launching a mass movement against the "repressive government". She will continue her struggle to establish people's rights, he said.

President over by City AL President Mohammad Hanif, the rally was also addressed by leaders of different city unit of AL.

AL's students' wing, Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL), also brought out a procession on the Bangabandhu Avenue condemning the attack.

After announcement of the hartal programme, AL brought out a procession from in front of party office in support of the hartal.

# Benazir's candidacy

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Military President Pervez Musharraf, who ousted Sharif, Bhutto's successor as prime minister, in a bloodless coup in October 1999, has decreed that convicted persons cannot contest polls and also that premiers who have served twice before cannot run for a third term.

Both Nawaz and Bhutto have served twice as premier and Nawaz was convicted of corruption after being overthrown.

Benazir's lawyers have challenged the laws barring her from polls in the provincial high court in Sindh and a hearing on the petition is expected on September 11.

Benazir's Pakistan People's Party issued a statement on Thursday welcoming the acceptance of the nomination of Sharif, a one-time bitter rival who has become an ally in adversity. It expressed hope that Bhutto's nomination would also be accepted.

A spokesman for Sharif's Pakistan Muslim League called on the military government to let the former ruling family return home to run their election campaign.

Nominations for both Sharif's brother Shahbaz Sharif and wife Kulsoom Sharif were accepted on Thursday. Musharraf says the Sharif family made a promise to stay out of politics for 10 years when the former prime minister went into exile to Saudi Arabia in 2000. The family denies this.

Local newspapers carried reports on Thursday saying that a special envoy of Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah met Musharraf on Wednesday and assured him the Sharifs would not return. A Saudi embassy spokesman said he had no information on the issue.

Nawaz last month had appeared to bow out of the election by handing over the reins of his party to Shahbaz, who also faces corruption charges in Pakistan.

Last week, Musharraf unveiled constitutional changes that will enable him to wield overriding power even after a civilian government is elected.

The changes, denounced by the opposition, empower him to dismiss parliament and chair a civilian-military National Security Council to oversee government.